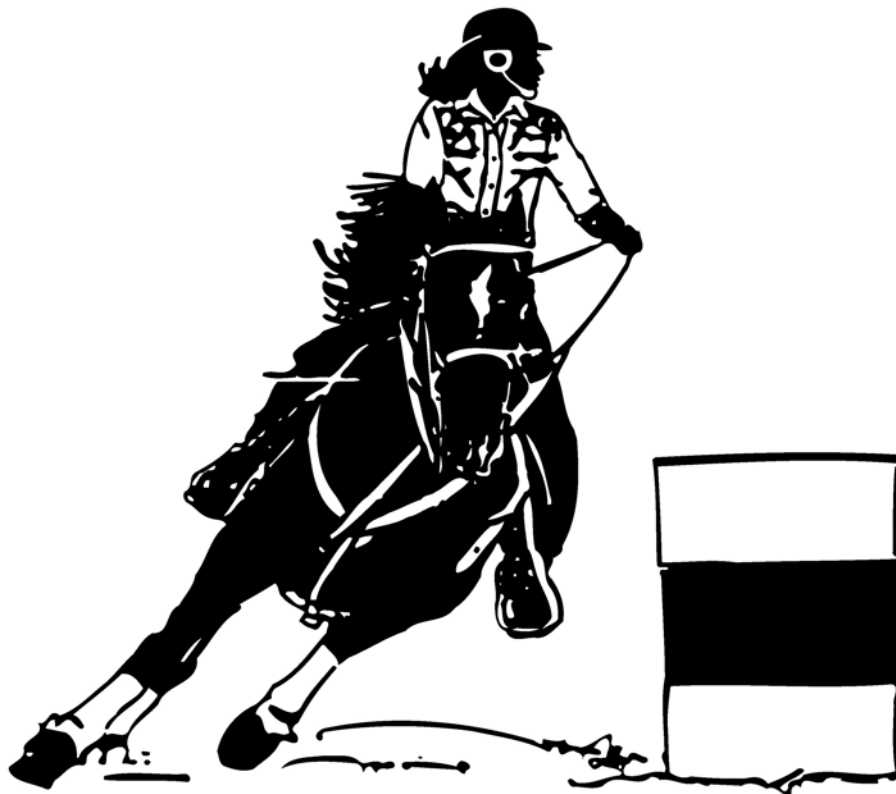


MISSOULA COUNTY 4-H

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WESTERN GAMES

YOUTH MANUAL AND CLASS RULES



MISSOULA COUNTY WESTERN GAMES HORSE PROJECT
RULES AND REGULATIONS
UPDATED OCTOBER 2009

1. There are **three** levels in the Western Games Project. **Walk/Trot** is a walk/trot only level; **Junior** is age 13 and under on October 1st of current 4- H year; and **Senior** is age 14 and over on October 1st of current 4-H year. There are no pre-requisites to participate at the **walk/trot** level. To participate in **Junior** or **Senior** levels of the Western Games Project, a member must have completed Horsemanship Level 3. If the member is currently enrolled in Horsemanship Levels 2 or 3, and wishes to compete in **Junior** or **Senior** levels in Western Games, they must successfully pass an evaluation of their riding skills. The evaluation will be offered several times in the spring and will be judged by members of the 4-H Horse Committee. The rider must demonstrate the riding skills required for Horsemanship Level 3.
2. Any administration of any drug affecting the central nervous system (stimulant or depressant) of a horse shown in any 4-H class is strictly prohibited.
3. If member wins overall highpoint and a purple ribbon in their current level they must advance to the next level regardless of age the next year.
4. 4-H dress is required for mounted Western Games. An approved helmet, white collared long-sleeved western shirt, long pants and western boots, with number visible on your back.
5. Western type tack must be properly adjusted to fit the rider and the horse, including stirrups.
6. If a rider goes off pattern or breaks gait, rider will be disqualified. **Walk/Trot** riders will be disqualified if they break to a lope during their pattern **for more than three strides**. See manual and guidelines for more disqualification information.
7. Overall winner will be decided in each division by a **combination of overall time, and points awarded from each division placing and a mandatory judged pattern**. A disqualification in one game or a white ribbon in the mandatory pattern would knock you out of the overall award, unless all members disqualified in one event. For overall award a member must do all game events, and the mandatory pattern.
8. Each member will be awarded points in each event they do. Fastest time will earn 10 points, 2nd 9 points, 3rd 8 points, 4th 7 points, 5th 6 points, 6th 5 points, 7th 4 points, 8th 3 points, 9th 2 points, 10th on down 1 point. If you disqualify 0 points will be awarded.
9. Each member will be awarded points for a MANDATORY judged pattern. Purple 10 points, Blue 7 points, red 4 points, and white 0 points.
10. A rider may be asked to move on during a ride at any time at the discretion of the ring steward.
11. Please read Missoula County 4-H Horse exhibitor's guidelines for more information.

MISSOULA COUNTY POLICY FOR PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR USE IN THE 4-H EQUINE PROGRAM

All Montana 4-H youth participating in the 4-H Equine Projects are required to wear equestrian approved protective headgear, properly fitted and with a chin strap.

WESTERN GAMES 4-H YOUTH MANUAL AND CLASS RULES

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WESTERN GAMES PROJECT BACKGROUND

This manual is to provide activities for all youth interested in improving their riding skills, basic horsemanship, and horse husbandry. The project includes guidelines to conduct games, encourage good sportsmanship, and recognize accomplishments. It also includes the five events most widely accepted in games competition throughout the Pacific Northwest. The events will be conducted at any 4-H sanctioned games show at the county and state level.

PURPOSES

- Develop leadership, initiative, sportsmanship, and responsibility.
- Develop self-reliance and patience by working with your animal daily.
- Learn to work with other 4-H'ers and leaders.
- Learn to keep good records and use them to make management decisions.
- Learn about equipment and its care.
- Learn Western Games rules and procedures.
- Learn to show courtesy to the public, judges, event and fair officials, and other competitors.
- Learn to appreciate riding as a safe, healthy, wholesome form of recreation.
- Learn to care for and safely manage a Western Games horse.
- Develop speaking ability by expressing your ideas before groups in demonstrations, judging contests, and other activities.
- Learn to be a versatile horse person.
- Experience the pride of taking care of and exhibiting your 4-H animal.
- Enjoy and benefit from the experience of being an active member of the 4-H program.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

1. You should have completed, or be currently enrolled in, Horsemanship Project 3.
2. You may own or lease a horse for this project. You are responsible for the daily care and feeding of your project animal. If the horse is boarded, you may delegate this responsibility to a caretaker.

When leasing a horse, make a business-like agreement with the owner; include such things as length of time you are to keep the horse, training, use, feeding, special care, showing, and breeding. Always live up to your part of the bargain.

Members of the same family may jointly care for and show one animal. If you do this, you may need to make adjustments; for example, two members of the same family may not compete in the same event in the same grade group, since a horse or pony may not compete against itself.

3. You need a saddle, bridle, saddle blanket, halter, lead rope, and grooming tools. You are responsible for the care of this equipment.
4. Keep a record of your income and expenses, training and riding time, vaccinations, veterinary care, and goal setting. Learn the specific rules for the classes you plan to enter.

5. Study this manual to completely understand the following 4-H Western Games rules:
 - general rules
 - disqualifications
 - penalties
 - illustrations and explanation of prerequisites for equipment and events
 - all matters pertaining to safety of horse and rider

A top and consistent games horse is a well trained athlete who knows its leads and obeys the aids given by the rider. The horse should stop without undue pressure being applied, for the safety of the rider and others in the arena. Consistency is just as important as speed, and many times more so. Participation in events or contests should be based on individual coordination, skill, and speed. Proficiency is attained by continued practice and improvement.

6. You may enroll in the project without a horse. This option offers you the opportunity to learn about horses and Western Games events, patterns, rules, and procedures. You may wish to share the information you gain with other 4-H members as part of a leadership project.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

1. Join a 4-H club.
2. Read and study project literature.
3. Plan your project.
 - Know what is required for all phases of the project.
 - Keep your 4-H records up to date.
4. Participate in as many clinics, shows, contests, and practices as possible.
5. Consult with 4-H leaders, clinic guests, experienced games people, or people knowledgeable about horses concerning the various phases of the project. Remember, genuine interest is rewarded.

6. Apply the knowledge, experience, and training you gain toward improving both your motivation and ability. Games are useful in teaching control of the horse, improving your alertness, and developing skills based on the coordination of horse and rider. The selection of events must be compatible with the rider's ability.
7. Basics of horsemanship (horse behavior, leading, grooming, saddling, bridling, mounting and dismounting, riding position, and controlling the horse) are covered in *Beginning Horsemanship*. This publication is available from your 4-H leader.

KEEPING 4-H RECORDS

Your record book is important. Some fairs and shows require it. It may also be required when you apply for a 4-H trip, grant, or scholarship. Keeping accurate records can help you decide what progress you are making, what events to enter, and help you keep track of your expenses, income, and riding time.

Keep your records current. It is easier to work on records consistently than to try to catch up at the end of the year.

WESTERN GAMES EVENTS

TEXAS BARREL RACE

Equipment and course: Three 55-gallon barrels set in a triangle 75 feet apart. An alternate course for narrow arenas is 60 feet between barrels #1 and #2, and 80 feet to barrel #3.

Pattern:

The course is run in a cloverleaf pattern starting either to the left or right barrel

Skills needed:

Correct leads must be understood and accomplished. The natural direction a horse turns determines which barrel to go to first. The position of a rider in the saddle and rein hands when turning the barrel is important. It may take a good horse many hours of walking, trotting, and schooling before attempting speed on the course.

POLE BENDING

Equipment and course: Six poles set in a straight line 21 feet apart.

Pattern:

Ride straight past the line of poles, turn around the end pole and zigzag through, or "bend" the line of poles down and back, finish the course by riding straight past the line on the opposite side you started.

Skills needed:

Your horse must know the correct leads and execute on cue when bending each pole. Some horses have natural leads and may be able to attain speed after being walked through and shown the course several times. Others may take hours of groundwork just to learn leads. You will have to learn and understand leads before attempting the pole bending course.

IDAHO FIGURE EIGHT STAKE RACE

Equipment and course: Two poles set 100 feet apart.

Pattern:

Rider executes a figure eight pattern around the two poles, starting with the pole farthest away.

Skills needed:

Smooth turns and flying changes of leads are most important. You must understand your horse's temperament and possible natural tendencies to run for the finish line or gate.

The alternate event is the Figure Eight Stake Race.

KEY RACE

Equipment and course: Four poles or cones set in pairs five feet apart. First set is 100 feet from the start/finish line; second set is 10 feet past first set.

Pattern:

Ride through the pairs of poles, turn and come back through the pairs of poles.

Skills needed:

Your horse must be able to accomplish a smooth rollback to be competitive. Ride past the poles or cones and stop before turning or attempting a rollback. Only the most accomplished riders are able to make it appear as a single maneuver.

The alternate event is the Keyhole Race.

FLAG RACE

OBJECTIVE; To race through the course mounted horseback. Deposit a flag in the first bucket; retrieve a flag from the second bucket, and cross the finish line.

RULES

1. There will be a 45 second time limit for junior and senior, and 60 seconds for walk/trot.
2. Equipment-two five gallon buckets set on 55 gallon barrels. Whole oats must be used to fill the buckets. No other substance permitted. The oats must be

four (4) inches from the top of both buckets. The flag must be at least 16 inches long. On the retrieving bucket, the top of the flag must protrude above the rim of the bucket a minimum of five (5) inches.

3. Barrels with buckets on top should be set as close as possible to the following dimensions; 100 feet from start/ finish line and 40-75 feet apart, arena permitting. There shall be a minimum of 20 feet from either barrel to arena fence or wall.
4. The contestant may run the course either direction, from left to right or right to left. In either case the bucket on the first barrel rider comes to shall not have a flag in it. The bucket on the second barrel rider comes to shall have a flag set in the center of the bucket of oats.
5. The contestant is given a flag just prior to or when rider enters the arena. Rider then races across the start/finish line toward the first barrel. As rider turns around the first barrel, he/she places the flag into the oats in the first bucket. Rider then crosses over to the second barrel and takes the flag out of the oats in the second bucket and races back across the start/finish line.
6. The contestant may circle the barrel if chooses to do so without penalty. Rider must carry the flag in their hand. Carrying the flag any other place but in his hand carries a two (2) second penalty.
7. The committee is encouraged and it is strongly recommended that the flag racing barrel pattern be raked at even intervals, preferably after every 5th run.

DISQUALIFICATION; A contestant will be disqualified for any of the following:

1. Knocking over a barrel or turning bucket over.
2. Failure to keep the flag in the first bucket. A dropped flag (on the ground) or a missed flag in a bucket is a “no time”.
3. Crossing the finish line without the flag from the second bucket.

4. Using the flag as a whip on the horse.
5. Anytime a contestant dismounts to retrieve flag from ground after he has crossed the starting line.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAINING

1. It is strongly recommended that no horse be ridden before the age of three years. Until then the horse can be saddled and worked from the ground.
2. Most trainers recommend the use of two hands on the reins, especially in the early training stages. This helps balance the horse and teach correct turning and bending. Also, two hands are allowed in all 4-H games events.
3. Before training for games events, the horse should have the following basic skills:
 - Lope on the correct lead on cue.
 - Be able to stop a willing, balanced stop.
 - Give to the bridle (includes bits, hackamores, etc.), meaning the horse should flex at the poll when pressure is put on the reins rather than resisting. Also the horse should follow the bit when asked for turns with a “leading rein,” which is the rein held outward in the direction of the turn.
 - Know leg aids. The horse should be taught to move away from pressure, including side passing.

Once a horse has acquired the above skills, you are ready to begin work on gaming.

GAMES TRAINING.

Always work on level ground; when working at speed, only ride on proper footing.

1. Familiarize the horse with the properties in the event and how to turn correctly around

them. Start with one barrel, pole, or cone, and walk the horse up to, around, and away from it. It is generally advised to turn the horse a few feet out from the property, creating a "pocket." As work progresses and the horse is going at faster gaits, it must lean into the turn to be balanced. To avoid knocking down properties later, the horse should be taught the spacing at a walk. This will also help discourage the horse from "diving" into the property. In all phases of training, the rider must use proper leg aids. When turning, the inside leg should be on the girth to bend the horse around the turn (see Fig. 7).

2. Once the horse is turning readily around one property, begin working on patterns. Start with one pattern, usually barrels, and work at a walk until the horse is familiar with it. Progress to a trot, remembering to use the same turning base or pocket. When a horse is working smoothly with a relaxed attitude, you can move to the lope. At this point, when a change of lead is required, use a simple lead change (slow to a trot, then ask for the other lead). Additional events may be introduced periodically to keep the horse's interest.

Repetition is necessary in training horses; however, it is possible to sour a horse by overdoing it. Know your horse and use common sense in the length of your workouts.

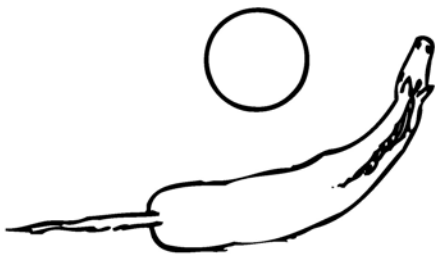


Fig. 7. Bending Around a Turn

3. When the horse is well-balanced while loping through the course, gradually

increase its speed to a gallop. If the horse remains balanced and under control, you can then ask for additional speed. However, if you begin to have problems, you will want to go back to a walk and trot to reinforce the training.

4. At this point your horse should be capable of handling the course at its maximum speed. In the process of teaching a horse games skills, repetition is a key. Once the horse knows what is required, it is important that it not be asked for speed over and over, day after day.

The difference between an average games horse and a top, willing competitor is that a top horse enjoys running the course. Therefore, it is reasonable to make the training and running of events as pleasant as possible. You should avoid using any aids (spurs, crops, or gimmicks) that hurt the horse. Of course, there are times when discipline is necessary during the training.

RIDING THE GAMES HORSE

1. Your method of riding can directly affect your time. You should be balanced with the horse, with your head and eyes looking forward. Looking back to see if the barrel, pole, or cone falls can easily throw your horse off stride. Keep your feet in the stirrups throughout the ride.
2. When coming into a turn, sit down deep in the saddle to help the horse gather itself. While turning, use your inside leg at the girth. As your horse is coming out of the turn, raise slightly out of the saddle to free the hindquarters.
3. Always keep in mind that your horse should enjoy games. Keep your hands as light as possible and give your horse a reward after performing satisfactorily.

SUGGESTED WESTERN

GAMES EQUIPMENT

Snaffle Bits

The snaffle bit is any bit that does not have shanks. It is a direct action bit. A snaffle has rings and usually has a jointed mouthpiece (Figs. 8 & 9). When the reins are pulled they apply direct pressure on the corners of the mouth, the tongue, and the bars. A snaffle is commonly used to train or school horses. It is not as severe as a curb bit; however, it has the advantage of applying a direct pull. Snaffles are commonly used in Western Games because of this direct pull. Some horses, however, may not respond easily to a snaffle and may require more control, especially with a young rider.

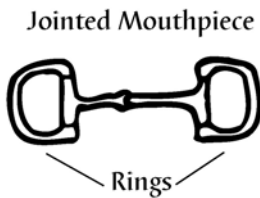


Fig. 8. Snaffle Bit
(may have jointed or solid mouthpiece)

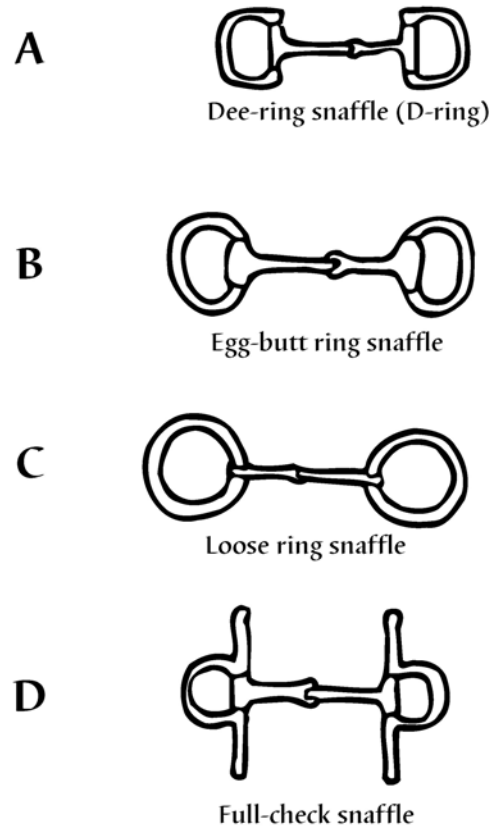


Fig. 9. Typical Snaffle Bits

Curb Bits

The curb bit works by leverage: (1) the mouthpiece presses on the tongue and bars, (2) the chain presses under the chin, and (3) the bridle presses against the poll. The curb pressure tends to lower the head and make the horse flex at the poll (Fig. 10).

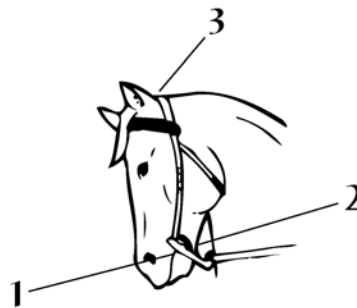


Fig. 10. Flexed at the Poll

Many types of shanks exist, from the simple cutting horse style to the ornate spade and halfbreed shanks. The mouthpiece, which may be jointed or solid, differs in severity. Generally, the higher the port, the more severe the bit.

The shank can be “fixed” (solid), or “loose” (jointed). Generally, a loose shank is preferred because it gives the horse a pre-signal and it works better using two hands on the reins. The shanks on the curb bit give the rider leverage action on the horse’s mouth. When the reins are pulled, the shanks act as levers to press the bit down on the horse’s tongue and the bars of its mouth. At the same time, pulling the reins also applies pressure on the chin groove and the poll. Any bit with reins attached to the end of the shanks is considered a curb bit. This is true even if it has a jointed mouthpiece. A curb bit without a chin strap is useless.

Curb bits can be more severe than snaffle bits because the leverage action increases the force applied. The action of the curb bit results in indirect pressure on the horse’s mouth. The longer the shanks, the more leverage (more severe). Do not use a curb bit as a training bit. It takes time and training to change a horse from a snaffle bit to a curb bit (Fig. 11).

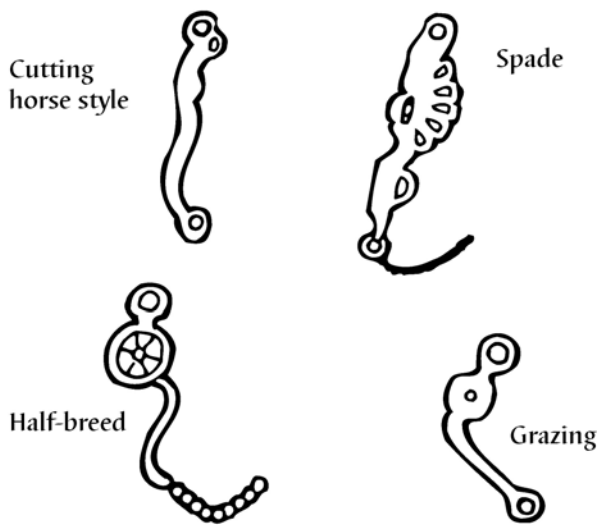


Fig. 11. Samples of Curb Bit Shanks

The Kimberwick bit (Fig. 12) is generally used on a horse that is too strong for a snaffle. It includes a curb chain, may have a solid or jointed mouthpiece, and solid or slotted D-ring.



Fig. 12. Kimberwick Bit

Hackamores

There are basically two types of hackamores. The bosal, or true hackamore, is a rawhide noseband (Fig. 13). It applies pressure to the horse’s nose, chin, and sometimes below the cheek. All bosals meet behind the horse’s jaw in a large ball called a heel button, which is weighted to hang low.

The mechanical hackamore, or hackamore bit, is actually not a bit since it has no mouthpiece (Fig. 14). It affects the nose through the pressure of a leather or covered metal noseband, and the chin groove by the leverage of the long (usually 8–9 inches) free-swinging metal shanks. The curb strap is attached to a short metal shank that curves back from the end of the noseband toward the chin. A metal bar, chain, or leather strap usually joins the two cheek bottoms to prevent the bit from swinging forward and up where it would be ineffective.

Hackamores are used widely in Western Games. They offer a great deal of control because of the

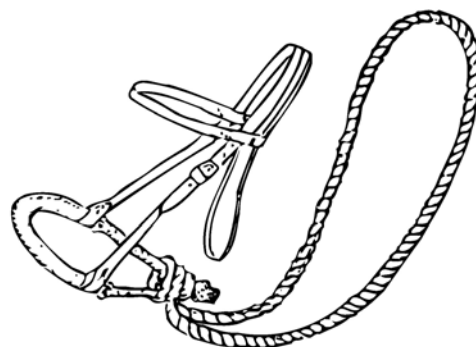


Fig. 13. Bosal Hackamore

leverage action of the long shanks, and since there is no bit in the horse's mouth, there is no possibility of damage to the mouth. All hackamores and bits must be approved by the Missoula County Horse Committee. No slip, gag, twisted wire bits and donut, rolls or flat polo mouthpieces may be used.

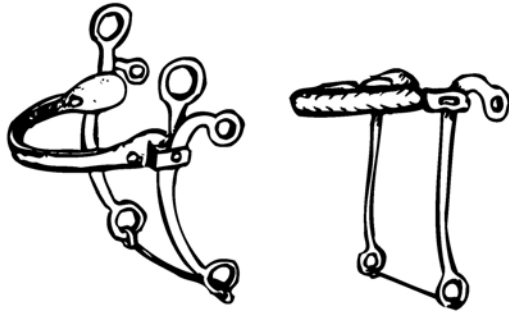


Fig. 14. Mechanical Hackamore Bits

Breast Collars

Breast collars are recommended to help hold the saddle in place. The breast collar attaches to the saddle on both sides, either directly to the rigging or, on some saddles, to a special slot or D-ring. The breast collar meets in a ring at the center of the horse's chest and an additional strap attaches between the legs to the girth (Fig. 15).

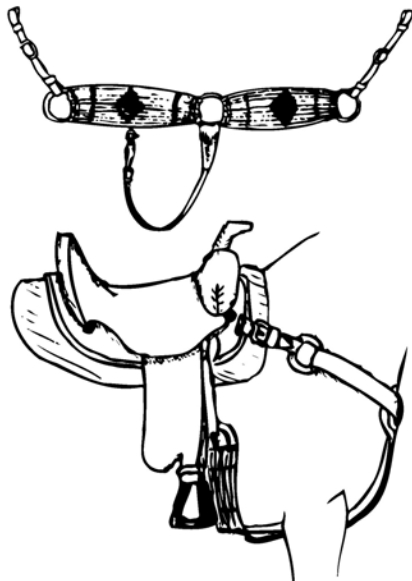


Fig. 15. Breast Collar

Tie-Downs

A tie-down is often used on horses who tend to carry their heads too high or have a habit of tossing their heads. It attaches to a noseband at one end and the girth at the other end. A tiedown should be adjusted so that when the horse is at rest, the tie-down can be lifted up to reach the throatlatch of the horse. For safety, it should be behind or attached to the breast collar. A tiedown may be used with any type of bridle; however, it can interfere with the action of the hackamore bit (Fig. 16).

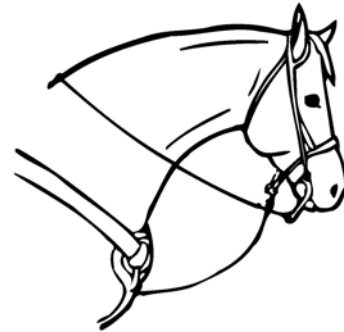


Fig. 16. Tie-Down

Running Martingale

A running martingale is a y-shaped strap attached to the girth that splits into two straps, each ending with a ring. Each rein runs through one ring, then to the rider's hand. To prevent the rings from catching on the bit attachment, rein stops must always be used (Fig. 17). This device is used only with a true snaffle bit. It keeps the "pull" of the rein coming from a consistent location, encouraging the horse to keep its head

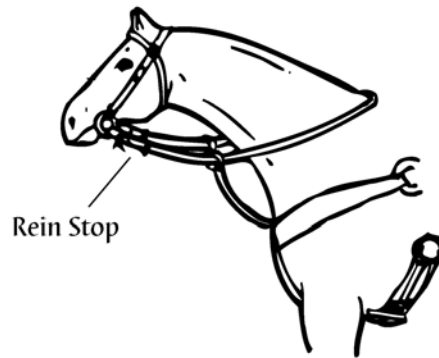


Fig. 17. Running Martingale

lower. A running martingale is never used with a curb bit, since it limits the leverage action of the bit.

Protective Gear

For the Horse. Splint boots or other types of boots are recommended to protect the horse's cannon bones during training and competition. With tight turns at high speed, horses can easily hit one leg with the hoof of the opposite leg, causing splints or lameness. Polo wraps—cloth bandages wrapped many times around the leg—offer adequate protection. However, if the wrap is not applied correctly it could come loose causing the horse to trip and bow tendons.

Bell boots, which cover the coronet band and most of the hoof, protect the horse from clipping a heel as it turns or lengthens to run.

For the Rider. An ASTM/SEI Equestrian-approved helmet is required at all times when mounted at a 4-H Western Games event. It is strongly recommended that members wear a helmet every time they ride! Head injuries are the most common serious injuries of horseback riders, and most accidents happen near home on horses thought to be safe.

Shin guards protect riders' legs if a horse dives into a barrel or pole.

Choosing a Western Saddle

Measure a western saddle from the back of the pommel straight back to the front of the cantle.

Typical seat sizes are:

Pony	12–13"
Youth	14–14 1/2"
Adult	15–15 1/2"
Large Adult	16–17"

These sizes may vary because the saddle tree is measured before padding and outer coverings are added. Also, the shape of the seat and its depth can affect how it fits. Always try a saddle before buying to make sure it fits both you and the horse.

Many types of riggings exist; they vary from full-double to center-fire. Your horse's conformation determines the riggings. A horse with a well-laid-back shoulder would be comfortable with a full or 7/8 rigged saddle, while a horse with shorter or steeper shoulders requires a 3/4 or 5/8 rigged saddle. When the saddle is correctly placed behind the shoulder blades, there should be some space between the horse's elbow and the cinch. This allows the horse freedom of its front legs and helps prevent binding, which can cause sores (Fig. 18).



Full double rigging



3/4 double rigging



7/8, 3/4, 5/8 Center-fire rigging

Fig. 18. Western Saddle Rigging

Western Tack Adjustment. Properly adjusted tack makes your horse more comfortable, which helps make your ride pleasant and safe.

Bridle. The bit should fit properly in the horse's mouth. The upper shank on a curb bit, where the headstall is attached, must not be tight against the horse's face. Often you will need to bend this upper shank to fit correctly. The browband should lay comfortably on the head without pulling the headstall against the ears. A split-ear crown piece should fit comfortably around one ear without binding. For the

throatlatch, allow at least two fingers between the strap and horse's throat when the horse's head is in a resting position. Adjust the curb strap or chain to allow enough space for two fingers (flat) between the strap and chin.

Saddle Blanket. This provides adequate padding and extends about 4 inches in front of the saddle. Put the blanket and then the saddle forward of the proper place and slide them back into place. Never pull the saddle forward. Pull the blanket up in the gullet of the saddle to prevent binding over the withers and allow air circulation under the saddle.

Saddle. It settles into the pocket behind the horse's shoulder blades. When cinched tight, there should be two fingers' height (about 1 1/2 inches) between the withers and the arc of the fork under the saddle horn if the rider weighs less than 150 pounds. If the rider weighs more than 150 pounds, there should be a three finger clearance (Fig. 19). You may use additional padding or a pad with a cutout portion for the withers if you need more space. If there

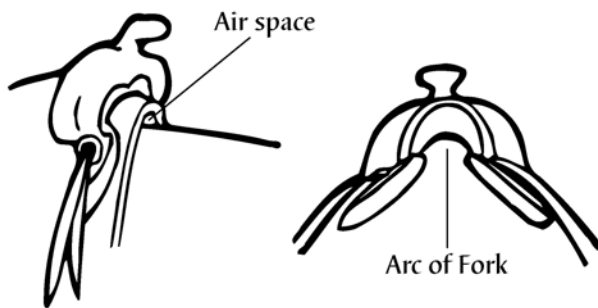


Fig. 19. Saddle Clearance

is more than 1 1/2 inches, the saddle tree could be too narrow for the horse's back. Check the back for dry spots after a long ride, which indicate the saddle is pinching the horse's back. This can lead to serious back sores. If additional padding does not solve the problem, the saddle should not be used.

The front cinch should hang straight down and about 2 inches behind the horse's elbow. When tight, the cinch should be centered on the horse. Be sure the cinch is long enough so the rings are not directly behind the elbow (Fig. 20).

A back cinch is optional. Always buckle this last when saddling and unbuckle first when unsaddling! The back cinch should be snug and there must be a connecting strap between it and the front cinch.

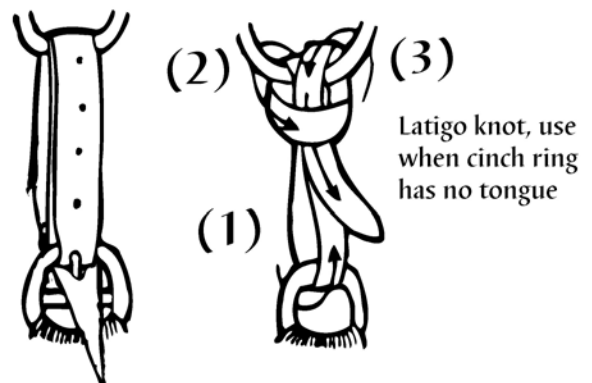


Fig. 20. Cinching

WESTERN GAMES CLASS RULES

The following rules have been established to govern 4-H Western Games in Missoula County.

NOTE: See also Ground Rules. These rules should be posted at every 4-H function.

GENERAL RULES

4-H Western Games for Missoula County shall be governed by this manual.

Horse's Age

In the Montana 4-H program a horse's age will be determined as of January 1 of the current year; a horse becomes 1 year old on January 1 of the year following the actual foaling date.

Ribbons and Awards

Ribbons will be awarded on a percentage. Overall will be decided in each division by a total of all combined game times. A disqualification in one game would knock you out of the overall award. The member with the least amount of time out of the total number of events will be the overall winner.

Conduct

Show management reserves the right to dismiss anyone from any 4-H class or show for misconduct or lack of sportsmanship, or for infractions of the ground rules or class rules for 4-H Western Games as stated in this manual.

Protests

Individuals working with a 4-H show should not be interrupted or interfered with in any way. If someone doesn't agree with what is being done at an event or show, he or she can submit a written, signed protest to the Show Management within 12 hours of the cause of protest. A judge's decision is not protestable unless it is an alleged violation of the rules. A cash deposit of \$25.00 may be required to accompany a written protest. The deposit will be refunded if the protest is upheld.

Entry Regulation Concerning Accidents

Each horse and rider is eligible as entered on an appropriate entry form. It is understood that the parent or legal guardian and the 4-H participant make the entry at their own risk and are subject to class rules for 4-H Western Games as stated in this manual. If any loss or damage should occur from any cause, the participant, parent, or legal guardian will not make any claim against anyone connected with the 4-H event or owner(s) of the grounds on which the show is located.

Animal Drugging

The administration of any drug affecting the central nervous system (stimulant or depressant) of a horse shown in any 4-H class is strictly prohibited.

GROUND RULES

BREAKING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING RULES MAY RESULT IN DISMISSAL BY SHOW MANAGEMENT FROM THE SHOW AND FORFEITURE OF ALL AWARDS. ALSO, ANY GROSS ABUSE OF THESE RULES MAY RESULT IN THE REMOVAL OF A 4-H MEMBER FROM THE 4-H PROGRAM.

All 4-H events are provided for under the auspices of Montana cooperative extension. For youth safety, we ask that these rules be observed.

1. Equestrian approved helmets and proper boots must be worn at all times when mounted. It is recommended when youth are working around their horses they wear equestrian approved helmets and proper boots.
2. No alcoholic beverages or illegal substances.

3. Contestants may not smoke or chew tobacco in the exhibit area. As adults are role models for youth, it is highly recommended that adults not smoke or chew tobacco in exhibit area.
4. No dogs allowed on grounds unless on a leash or confined.
5. No animal abuse.
6. Only 4-H members may ride or school a horse while on the show grounds.
7. The arena is off-limits to everyone except working show personnel.
8. After all games are completed, approach the official for information only, not to dispute decisions.
9. The show grievance committee can dismiss a visibly sick or lame animal from participation. A committee consists of at least three or more people designated by the horse committee.
10. Anyone may be asked to leave the grounds for unacceptable behavior.
11. No riding horses double at any time.
12. No riding horses using halters only.
13. No racing or running horses outside the show or warm-up arena.
14. Any rider not having his or her mount under control shall be dismissed from the ring and shall be disqualified from that class at the judge's discretion.
15. When rider dismounts, reins must be taken off the horse's neck for safety.
16. Each contestant shall be given an entry number. This number must be displayed on the rider's back at all times while competing. The rider or handler will be penalized for having anything obscure the view of the number.

SECTION 1.
4-H WESTERN GAMES EVENTS

Counties have the option of adding events to fit the needs of their riders and arenas.

- A. Texas Barrel Race
- B. Pole Bending
- C. Flag Race
- D. Idaho Figure Eight Stake Race or Figure Eight Stake Race
- E. Key Race or Keyhole Race

SECTION 2.

EQUIPMENT AND ATTIRE

- A. A mandatory warning is made before a dress or equipment call.
- B. A gate steward should be on hand for an equipment and attire check before the exhibitor enters the arena. If a deficiency is discovered, the exhibitor will be given an opportunity to fix the problem.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

Western Saddle with Horn

- A keeper strap is recommended on stirrup leathers.
- If the saddle has a back cinch, a connector strap to the front cinch is required.
- If the cinch buckle has a tongue it must be buckled into a hole in the latigo or billet.

Bridle with throatlatch

- Bit or hackamore-type is optional (must be humane).
- Curb bits must have a curb strap or chain.
- Snaffle bits may have a strap to prevent the bit from pulling through the mouth.
- Closed reins are recommended.

Optional Equipment

- Tie-Down
- Noseband or cavesson
- Running martingale (must have rein stops and may be used only with a snaffle bit)
- Protective boots (i.e., splint boots or bell boots)
- Bat, whip or "Over-and-Under"

Equipment Not Allowed

- Tackelberry buckle (quick release on cinch)
- Any inhumane equipment (i.e., bicycle chain mouthpieces)
- Rubberbands on the stirrups
- Anything that attaches the rider to the horse or saddle
- Slip, gag, or twisted wire bits, and donut, rolls and flat polo mouthpieces may not be used.
- Unapproved hackamores.

Required Attire

- ASTM-SEI approved Equestrian helmet to be worn at all times when mounted
- Western boots
- Long-sleeved western shirt
- Long pants
- The contestant's number must be clearly visible at all times on his or her back

Optional Attire

- Shin guards
- Belt
- Gloves
- Spurs-blunt
- Belts and jackets can easily be caught on the saddle horn as the rider leans forward, creating a hazardous situation. If worn, they should have a breakaway feature (snaps, velcro, etc.).

Safety Checklist

All tack must be properly adjusted and in safe, usable condition. Use the following list for a safety inspection:

1. Western saddle
 1. D-ring and latigo(s)
 2. D-ring and offside billet
 3. Cinch and cinch ring
 4. Keeper strap at place where fender and stirrup meet
 5. Make sure connector strap joins front and rear cinches
 6. Rear cinch billets and buckles
 7. Rigging connection of saddle for loose or missing nails and loose leather
2. Bridles with a throatlatch
 - a. All stitching
 - b. Condition of the leather where the headstall, reins, and curb strap attach to the bit

SECTION 3. COURSE

Refer to Section 13: Equipment Specifications, and Section 14: Course Diagrams.

- A. Where a line is designated, it means a white lime line.
- B. Two poles, exactly 30 feet apart, set slightly on course designate the start/finish line.
- C. Course measurement is made from the center of the poles, barrels, containers, or other arena equipment.

SECTION 4. TIES

The recommended procedure for breaking ties is a runoff or toss of the coin. In breaking a tie with a runoff, the rider with the slower time takes the next lower position. If there is still a disagreement, the judge's decision is final.

SECTION 5. MOUNTED RIDERS

Riders are considered mounted when their knees are over the center line of the horse's back. Riders must be mounted when crossing the start/finish line.

SECTION 6. RERIDES

Rerides are run after the last rider in that event.

- A. Acceptable reasons for rerides:
 - 1. Timing device failure
 - 2. Course obstruction as determined by the official
 - 3. Course measured incorrectly
 - 4. Equipment failure due to weather conditions, e.g., poles blown over, flags side switches due to wind
- B. Unacceptable reasons for rerides:
 - 1. Horse or rider damage to arena equipment

- 2. Failure of tack or participant's equipment
 - 3. Horse or rider accident or injury
- C. Only penalties or disqualifications incurred on a reride will be assessed to the ride.

SECTION 7. LANE LINES

Lane lines are strongly recommended, but not required. If lane lines are used, "ALL" lines are used. It is strongly recommended that line judges be designated. When more than one course is in use, lane lines are required for safety.

SECTION 8. MOVING A COURSE

If a course is moved for safety reasons, riders may choose to reride or keep their first time. If the course is moved because of initial wrong measurement, all riders must reride.

SECTION 9. ARENA SAFETY

- A. During the running of any event, all arena gates must be closed. Contestants must enter and leave the arena at a walk. All horses must be under control. When rider dismounts, reins must be taken off the horse's neck for safety.
- B. Only contestants, ring crew, and officials are allowed in the arena.
- C. Horses must be tied in designated areas, not to arena fences, rails, or any other hazardous place.
- D. Horses that constitute a safety hazard may be disqualified.
- E. In all events the ring crew resets downed equipment or repairs lines after a rider has completed the course.

SECTION 10.
OFFICIALS

9. The official must insure that all equipment and the course is set correctly.

A. Recommended Qualifications

1. Officials must be knowledgeable and experienced in Western Games.
2. Officials at county and state 4-H shows should not be members of any club whose members compete in the show.
3. Officials should be familiar with all signals.
4. Officials must be thoroughly familiar with the events for which they are responsible.
 1. A list of events must be made available prior to the show.
 2. The event listing must include all event rules and diagrams of patterns of each course to be run.

B. Officials' Duties

1. At least one official (two are recommended) must be provided for each event.
2. Officials determine rule infractions.
3. If the officials are in doubt, the decision is made in favor of the rider.
4. The official is required to carry or have available a copy of Western Games Youth Manual and Class Rules and Missoula county exhibitor horse guidelines.
5. Officials are required to follow all rules specified in this manual.
6. Officials will judge a class to completion.
7. The official is to make sure that the arena is safe and that all gates are closed.
8. The officials are the only persons with the authority to give the green flag as a signal that the course is ready for the rider to start.

C. Officials' Signals (see Figs. 21-29)



Fig. 21.
Course is ready—hold up green flag



Fig. 22.
General disqualification —thumb
extended over shoulder



Fig. 23.
Failure to start on time—point to wrist watch



Fig. 24.
Striking ahead of cinch—jab thumb into side



Fig. 27.
Five-second penalty—hand raised with five fingers extended. Repeat to show 10, 15, or more seconds



Fig. 25.
Leaving the course—horizontal circular motion



Fig. 28.
Safe or clean run—both hands, palms down and extended arm's length in front with a back and forth motion



Fig. 26.
Striking the horse with arena equipment—slap thigh



Fig. 29.
Unnecessary roughness or abusing the horse—both thumbs to the ribs

SECTION 11.
RIDER DISQUALIFICATION

Following are reasons for rider disqualification during a Western Games event or show:

- A. White Ribbon.
1. Leaving the course, runouts, refusals, upsetting starting poles or cones, all four feet of horse crossing the lane line, or taking more than one minute to cross



the starting line after being given the course. A rider may move the horse across the runout lane to determine the preferred angle to start the run.

2. In the Keyhole Race the rider will be disqualified if the horse steps on or outside any of the marked lines, or fails to have all four feet inside the circle before turning toward the finish line.
3. In the Key Race the rider will be disqualified if the horse fails to pass a line or plane with all four feet between the last two poles or cones.
4. Loose horse or grounded rider (unmounted and touching the ground).

SECTION 12.
TIME PENALTIES

- A. Following are reasons for five-second penalties during a Western Games event:
1. Knockdown of a pole, barrel, container, or cone.
 2. Flag dropped or container missed.
- B. A ten-second penalty is added for failure to pick up the flag in the two barrel flag.

SECTION 13.
EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

- A. Texas Barrels—55-gallon barrels. Barrels are to be set with ring down in the inverted position. Eight (8) pounds of water or sand are recommended to be added to the barrels.
- B. Pole Events
Bases and poles must weigh 11–18 pounds. Any needed extra weight must be applied to the base's bottom center. Commercially marketed bases of the above weight and width standards are recommended.

1. Poles—white. Rubber bases are strongly recommended; however, metal bases made as shown in Fig. 30 are allowed.
 - a. Standard—1 to 1 1/2-inch inside diameter, schedule 40 to 80 white plastic pipe, 80 inches long.

Plastic pole secured to base.

- b. Optional—1 to 1 1/2-inch inside diameter, schedule 40 or 80 white plastic pipe.
- c. One 1/32-inch steel rod, 2 inches long or one 1/4-inch pipe, maximum 6 inches long welded to disc.
- d. A 3/8-inch steel rod, welded to disc edge 54 inches long.
- e. Rubber or plastic hose covering rod and disc edge, 54 inches long, and attached to disc with wire passed through holes drilled in disc and twisted tight on underside.
- f. Recommended base—minimum 14-inch, maximum 18-inch diameter.

- Discs—a 16-inch disc is the best choice. It provides the maximum diameter allowed for bases after adding cold rolled steel rod to the edge.

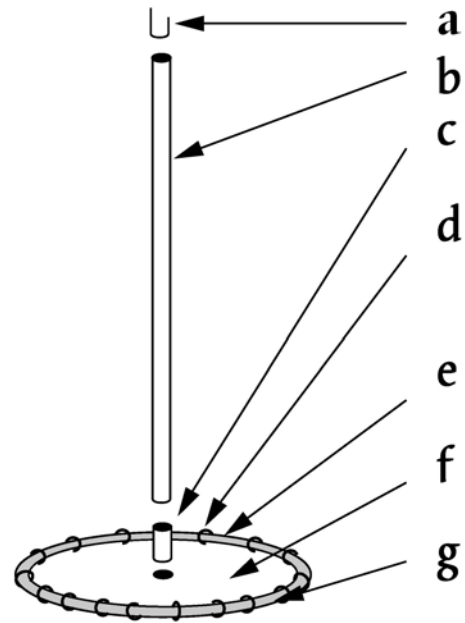


Fig. 30. Pole

- Pole Bases—cold rolled steel rod is much easier to weld to the edge of the disc if the disc is slightly ground off around the edge. The most inexpensive and best rubber hose for the edge of discs is used washing machine hose.
- g. Wire ties.

D. Key Races—Four poles or four 18-inch cones. Red socks, 40 inches long to cover the upper shaft of poles are optional.

E. Timing— Electric clocks are recommended. Stop watches with at least 100th-second are acceptable. Hundredth hands must be read back to mark when falling between marks.

SECTION 14.

WESTERN GAMES COURSE DIAGRAMS

Riders must have their horses under control at the start and close of the running portion of a games event. In arenas that are short, turnouts may be allowed for safety. In all events riders must stop their horses, hesitate, and acknowledge the judge to complete the ride.

A. Fig. 31 illustrates boundaries (lane lines and runout lane), designated by chalk lines, for the following: Two Barrel Flag Race; Key Race; Keyhole Race; Idaho Figure Eight Stake Race; and Figure Eight Stake Race.

1. The runout lane is required, but may be modified to accommodate shorter areas.
2. The lane lines are required when more than one lane is in use. On a single course they are optional.



Fig. 31. Western Games Course Diagram

2. Key Race (see Fig. 33)

- a. Course—Four poles or four 18-inch cones. Red socks, 40 inches long to cover the upper shaft of poles are optional.
- b. Event—Riders cross start line and ride down course, through and beyond last two poles (or cones). They turn their horses, ride back through poles (or cones) and across finish line.

3. Keyhole Race—Alternate (see Fig. 34)

- a. Course—Keyhole pattern outlined and marked with white lime, according to the diagram included with this event.
- b. Event—Riders cross start line, ride into circle of keyhole (all four feet of horse must be inside circle), turn horse, and ride back out of keyhole and across finish line.

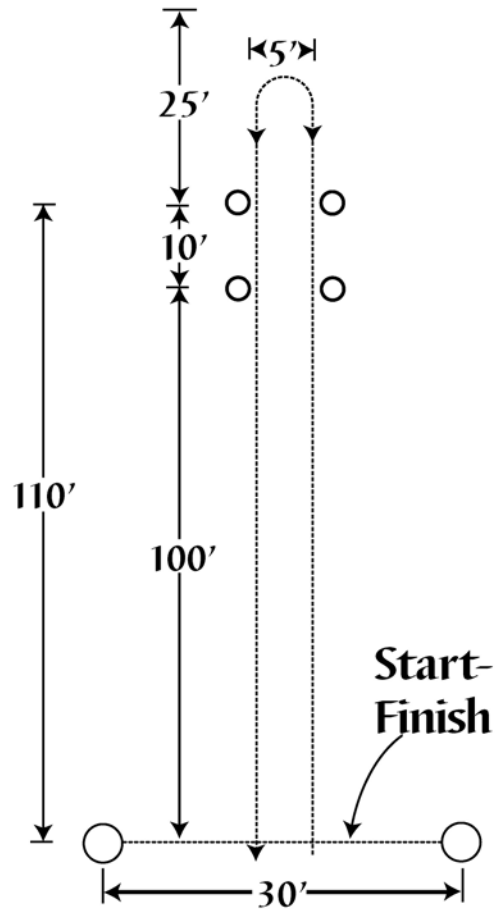


Fig. 33. Key Race

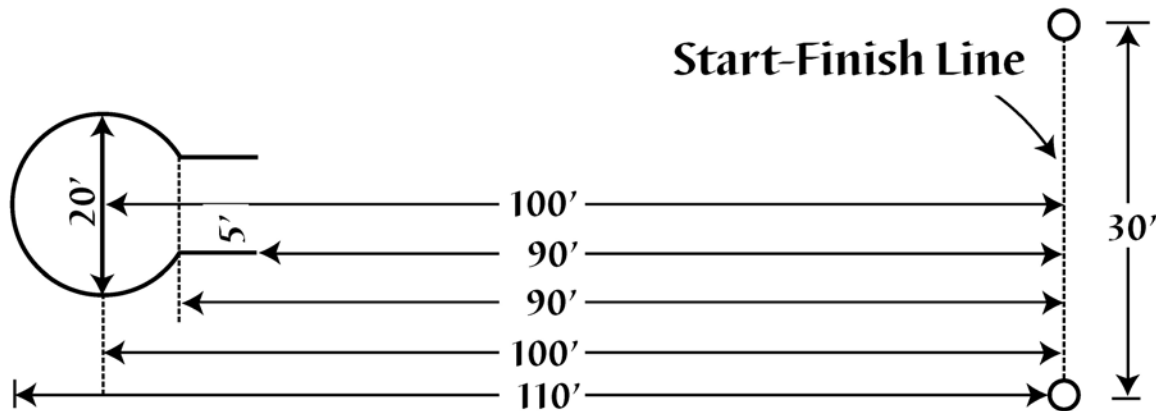


Fig. 34. Keyhole Race

**4. Idaho Figure Eight Stake Race (Fig. 35).
Recommended for State 4-H Fair.**

- a. Course—Two poles set 100 feet apart, the first, 20 feet from the start-finish line; the second, 120 feet from the same line (see diagram).
- b. Event —Riders cross start line; ride down side of course (side optional) to pole B; turn pole B; ride to pole A; turn pole A (opposite direction); ride back to pole B; turn pole B (opposite direction of A); and ride across finish line, having ridden a figure eight pattern.

**5. Figure Eight Stake Race—Alternate
(see Fig. 36)**

- a. Course—Four poles, two set 120 feet apart at opposite ends of the course; two set 30 feet apart at a point halfway between the two end poles. The two center poles mark the start/finish line.
- b. Event—Riders start by crossing start line (direction of start optional), and then ride a figure eight pattern around the two end poles. (Direction of first turn is optional; second turn, opposite direction.)

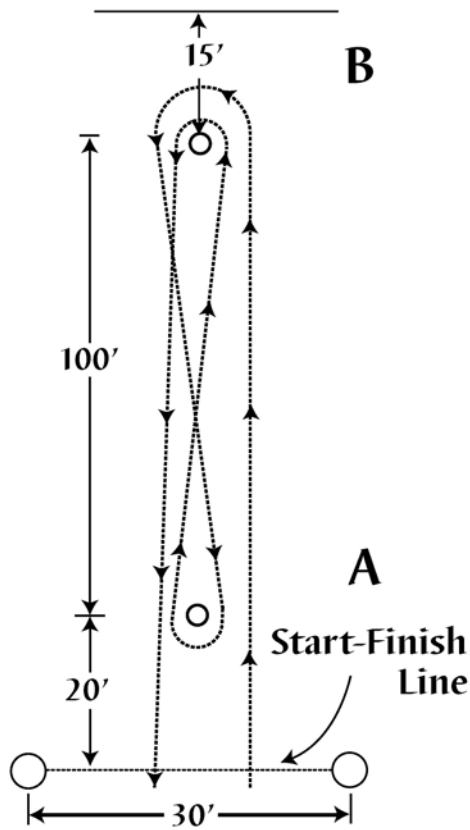


Fig. 35. Idaho Figure Eight Stake Race

6. Pole Bending (see Figs. 37 and 38)

- a. Course—Six poles placed in a straight line, spaced 21 feet apart, the first set 21 feet from the start/finish line.
- b. Event—Riders cross start line, ride to pole #6 (side optional), turn pole #6 left or right and weave (bend) around the opposite side of each pole to pole #1; turn around pole #1 and weave (bend) around the opposite side of each pole to pole #6; turn around #6 and ride across the finish line. If riders miss a pole, stop, come back, and correct their mistake, continue, and complete the course correctly, they have in effect run the course as drawn, and this is a clean ride.

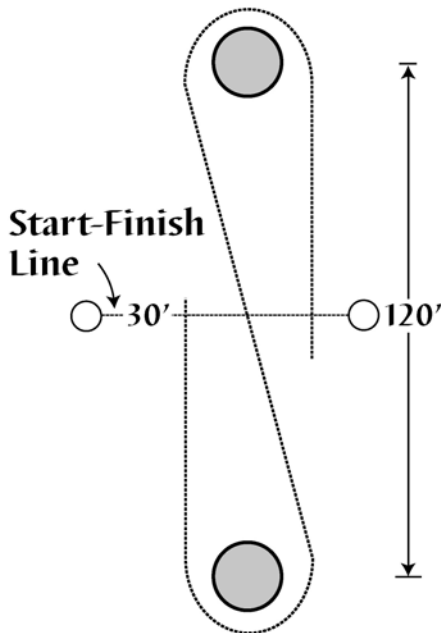


Fig. 36. Figure Eight Stake Race (Alternate)

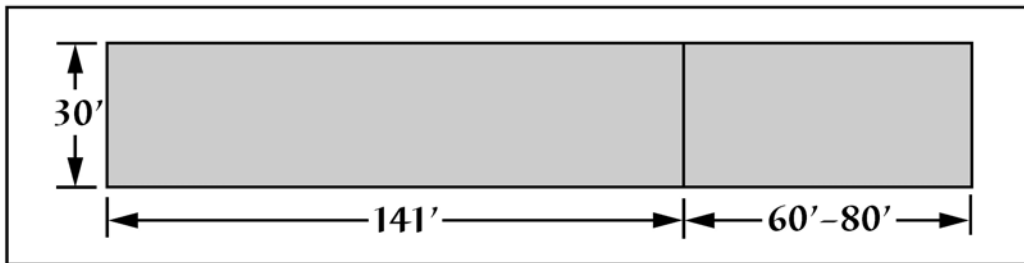


Fig. 37. Pole Bending Boundary

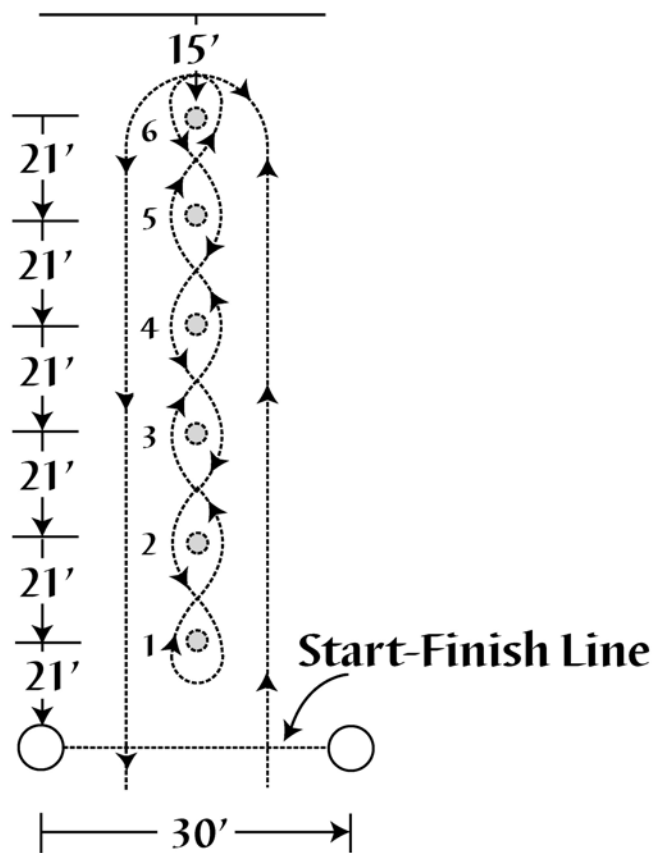


Fig. 38. Pole Bending Course

7. Texas Barrels (see Figs. 39 and 40)

- a. Course—Three barrels placed in a triangular formation according to the diagram included for this event.
- b. Event —Riders cross start line and ride to barrel #1, circle #1 to the right and ride to barrel #2; circle #2 to the left and ride to barrel #3; circle #3 to the left and ride across finish line. Riders may circle

barrel #2 first, continuing to #1 then #3, using the same cloverleaf pattern described. If a rider turns a barrel the wrong way, but goes back, turns the barrel the right way and completes the course correctly, it is a clean ride.

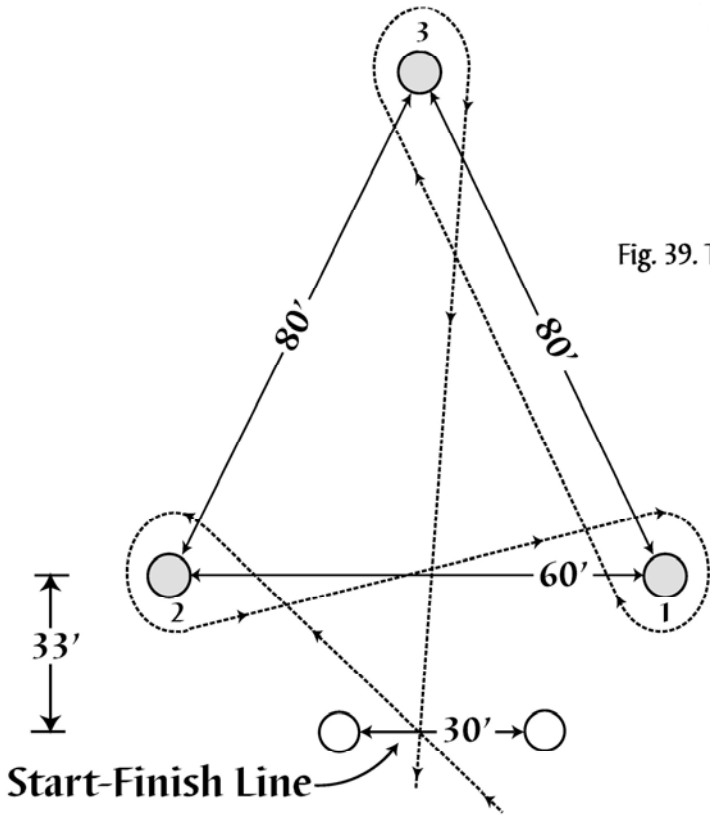
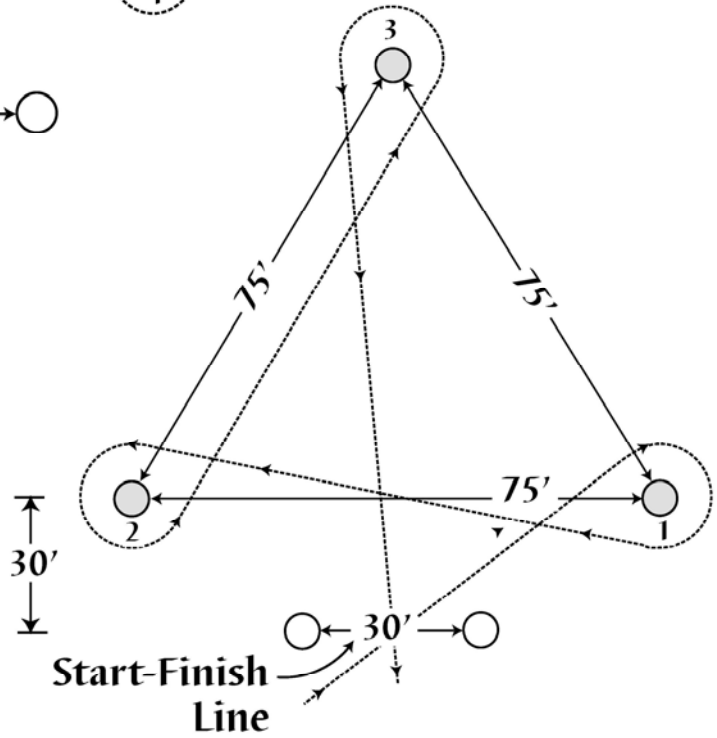


Fig. 39. Texas Barrel Race Regular Course

Fig. 40. Texas Barrel Race Alternate Course
(for use in narrow arenas)



Flag race see figure 41;

- a) Race through the course mounted horseback. Deposit a flag in the first bucket retrieve a flag from the second bucket, and cross the finish line.
- b) Equipment-two five gallon buckets set on 55 gallon barrels. Buckets are filled with whole oats. No other substance permitted.
- c) Contestant may run the course either direction.
- d) See complete rules page 7 and 8 of this manual and guidelines in the Missoula County 4-H Horse Exhibitor Guidelines.

Fig. 41. Flag Race

